

submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Thus, withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is requested to consider the references submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed with this application on January 26, 2001. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the IDS or its enclosures is not present in the PTO file.

Applicants submit an accompanying Information Disclosure Statement and references for consideration by the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Information Disclosure Statement
Appendix
Substitute Abstract

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APPENDIX

Changes to Abstract:

The following is a marked-up version of the amended Abstract.

A projection exposure apparatus includes a projection optical system, which is arranged in an optical path between a first surface and a second surface, projects a pattern on a negative plate arranged on the first surface onto a workpiece arranged on the second surface and exposes the pattern thereon. The projection optical system includes a first imaging optical subsystem having a dioptric imaging optical system; a second imaging optical subsystem having a concave reflecting system; a third imaging optical subsystem having a dioptric imaging optical system; a first folding mirror arranged in an optical path between the first imaging optical subsystem and the second imaging optical subsystem; and a second folding mirror arranged in an optical path between the second imaging optical subsystem and the third imaging optical subsystem. The first imaging optical subsystem forms a first intermediate image of the first surface into the optical path between the first imaging optical subsystem and the second imaging optical subsystem. The~~and the~~ second imaging optical subsystem forms a second intermediate image of the first surface into the optical path ~~between the second imaging optical subsystem and the third imaging optical subsystem.~~